

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 181589
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:EUR/SOV:KBROWN
APPROVED BY:EUR/SOV:SMCCALL
EUR/WE:MCRAMERUS
S/S-O:SVALERGA

-----086950 190912Z /16

R 182225Z JUL 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 7750

S E C R E T STATE 181589

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT PARIS 22345 ACTION SECSTATE INFO MOGADISCIO,
JIDDA, ADDIS ABABA, DJIBOUTI, CAIRO, KHARTOUM, NAIROBI, AND
BAGHDAD DATED JULY 13, 1978.

QUOTE: S E C R E T PARIS 22345

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: MASS, EAID, PEPR, FR, SO
SUBJ: SIAD BARRE VISIT TO FRANCE

1. ON JULY 13 WE DISCUSSED SIAD BARRE'S JULY 11-12
VISIT TO PARIS WITH ELYSEE AFRICAN ADVISOR, RENE
JOURNIAC. JOURNIAC SAID THAT THERE WERE FEW SURPRISES
IN WHAT SIAD HAD TO SAY. HE HAD EXPOUNDED TO PRESI-
DENT GISCARD D'ESTAING THE FAMILIAR ARGUMENT THAT
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SOMALIA IS THE VICTIM OF A CONCERTED RUSSIAN PLOT TO
EXERT CONTROL OVER THE RED SEA AREA AND EVENTUALLY
TO ENCIRCLE SAUDI ARABIA AS DEMONSTRATED BY THE EVENTS
IN THE PDRY AND AFGHANISTAN. THIS WAS ACCOMPANIED BY
EXHORTATIONS ON THE NEED OF WESTERN SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA
TO COUNTER SOVIET AIMS. A NEW TWIST TO SIAD'S PRE-
SENTATION WAS THE CONTENTION THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NEAR

AGREEMENT WITH THE ERITREAN PEOPLES LIBERATION FORCES TO SUPPORT THE CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT MARXIST STATE IN ERITREA WHICH WOULD BE A SOVIET CLIENT IN THE PATTERN OF ANGOLA. JOURNIAC SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND THIS POINT OF THE PRESENTATION INTERESTING BUT IMPLAUSIBLE. AMONG OTHER REASONS FOR SKEPTICISM, THE SOVIETS HAVING BADLY MISCALCULATED THE STRENGTH OF NATIONALIST FEELINGS IN EARLIER DEALINGS WITH SOMALIA ARE HARDLY LIKELY TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE IN DEALING WITH ETHIOPIA. AT THE SAME TIME, THERE WAS SOME TRUTH IN WHAT SIAD HAD TO SAY ABOUT APPARENTLY UNCHECKED GROWTH OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN THE AREA.

2. SIAD BARRE TOLD THE FRENCH THAT HE WOULD BE TRAVELING TO IRAQ AFTER FRANCE TO CONSULT WITH IRAQI LEADERS WHO HE MAINTAINED, HAVE BEEN MARKED AS THE NEXT SOVIET VICTIMS IN THE PLOT TO ENCIRCLE SAUDI ARABIA.

3. ON THE SUBJECT OF WHAT SIAD BARRE HAD ASKED FROM FRANCE, JOURNIAC SAID THAT HE HAD COME EQUIPPED WITH AN EXTENSIVE LIST OF DEMANDS FOR ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE FRANCE WILL DO SOMETHING AFTER SIAD'S REQUESTS HAVE BEEN STUDIED IN MORE DETAIL. SIAD'S REQUESTS ON THE MILITARY SIDE HAD BEEN TYPICALLY EXTENSIVE--IN EFFECT ENOUGH TO
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RE-EQUIP EIGHT DIVISIONS. THE FRENCH HAD TAKEN THE LIST AND SAID THEY WOULD EXAMINE IT. WHEN THEY ASKED WHO MIGHT PAY FOR ALL THIS EQUIPMENT EVEN IF IT WERE AVAILABLE, SIAD HAD REPLIED THAT THERE WAS NO PROBLEM; THE SAUDIS HAVE AGREED TO PICK UP THE TAB FOR WHATEVER SOMALIA CAN OBTAIN. JOURNIAC SAID THAT IT WAS OUT OF THE QUESTION THAT FRANCE WOULD PROVIDE ANYTHING BUT DEFENSIVE ARMS UNTIL THE SITUATION IN THE AREA RETURNS TO A SEMBLANCE OF PEACE AND NORMALITY. COMMENT: THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT FRANCE WOULD RESPOND CAUTIOUSLY BUT POSITIVELY WITH AN OFFER OF SOME DEFENSIVE WEAPONS EVEN BEFORE PEACE RETURNS TO THE OGADEN. END COMMENT.

4. IN REPLY TO A QUESTION JOURNIAC SAID THAT SIAD BARRE HAD NOT EVEN HINTED AT THE POSSIBILITY OF A TURNING TO THE SOVIETS IF HE DID NOT RECEIVE SATISFACTION IN THE WEST. "THERE WAS NOT EVEN A WHIFF OF BLACKMAIL."
HARTMAN UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HEAD OF GOVERNMENT VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE181589
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EUR/SOV:KBROWN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780296-0066
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780746/aaaabmsk.tel
Line Count: 114
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 6f185171-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1965715
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SIAD BARRE VISIT TO FRANCE
TAGS: MASS, EAID, PEPR, FR, SO, (MOHAMED SIAD BARRE)
To: MOSCOW
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6f185171-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014